Chairman's Report to the 2026 General Meeting

We have had another busy and rewarding season, and I would like to begin by congratulating all our league, cup and individual winners. Horspath 2 won Division 1, while Banbury 2 lifted the Pullinger Cup, Oxenford 1 won the Airey Cup and Wroxton 1 secured the Telegraph Cup. Congratulations also go to the winners throughout all 23 divisions and to every club, player and volunteer who contributed to the season.

The scale of the Cherwell Cricket League continues to be one of its strengths. We now comprise 102 clubs and 229 teams across nine tiers and six counties. Managing a competition of this size requires considerable commitment from clubs and from the many people who support the League. It also makes consistency, timely communication and respect for the regulations increasingly important if we are to provide the best possible experience for everyone involved.

There were some outstanding achievements during the season. Arshad Latif's 202 for Stokenchurch 1 was the highest individual score recorded on the League website, while Steve Miller's 9 for 19 for Leighton Buzzard Town 3 led the bowling performances. Wroxton 2 recorded the highest team total with 392. These are exceptional performances, but they sit alongside many equally important contributions made each week by players at every level of the League.

The continued use of Play-Cricket and live scoring is helping to improve the visibility and administration of our matches. Clubs have made good progress in adopting the system, and I would encourage them to maintain that momentum in 2027. Accurate team information, prompt result submission and reliable scoring all help the League operate efficiently and allow players, supporters and the wider cricket community to follow our competitions.

Umpires and scorers remain central to the quality and smooth running of our cricket. I would like to thank all panel and club umpires, together with the scorers who give their time each week. Clubs should continue to identify and develop new officials rather than relying on a small number of individuals. Training opportunities are available, including Bucks umpiring courses and an Umpire Development Course at Tiddington in March 2027. I would encourage clubs to support suitable candidates and to ensure that officials hold the appropriate training, membership and safeguarding requirements.

Grounds and facilities also remain an important part of our ambition to be an aspirational league. The 2026 General Playing Rules require all grounds to meet, or be working towards, the standards set out in the League's Ground Standards document. Clubs should continue to review both first and second grounds, paying attention to safe and suitable changing and toilet facilities, accommodation for officials, sheltered scoring positions, power for electronic scoring and the general presentation of the playing environment. The purpose is not simply compliance; it is to create conditions in which players and officials at every level can enjoy the game.

The League's cup competitions again provided valuable Sunday cricket and opportunities for teams across the tiers. My congratulations go to Banbury 2, Oxenford 1, Wroxton 1, Kimble 1, Oxenford 3 and Cheasley 2 as the 2026 cup winners. My thanks also go to the organisers, host clubs, umpires, scorers and volunteers who enabled these competitions and finals to take place.

As we look forward to 2027, clubs will need to prepare for the new Laws of Cricket. The seminar hosted by Thame Town on 24 November was a useful opportunity to understand the changes, and clubs should ensure that captains, players and officials are properly briefed before the new season begins on 8 May 2027. Clear preparation before the season will help us apply the Laws consistently and avoid unnecessary confusion once matches are under way.

I would like to thank the members of the League Management Committee for their work throughout the year. They are volunteers working on behalf of all member clubs, often dealing with difficult issues and significant volumes of administration. I also thank the officers and volunteers within our clubs. Without fixture secretaries, captains, grounds teams, welfare officers, umpires, scorers and the many people who carry out work behind the scenes, the League could not function.

The Cherwell Cricket League has a strong foundation, but we should not be complacent. We must continue to improve standards, strengthen the development of officials, embrace effective technology and ensure that our cricket remains competitive, inclusive and enjoyable. I hope we can continue to work together towards our aim of an aspirational league, with an atmosphere that is challenging and competitive while remaining an enjoyable recreation, allowing all teams to achieve their potential.

David Warner
Chairman - Cherwell Cricket League